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ART. XI. — CRITICAL NOTICES.

1. — *Thomas Jefferson: Étude Historique sur la Démocratie Américaine.* Par CORNÉLIS DE WITT. Paris: Didier et Cie. 1861. 8vo. pp. iv. and 568.

WE ought to have taken earlier notice of this able and scholarly essay; but it is not yet too late to say something in praise of a production of so much permanent interest. M. de Witt has studied with judgment and fidelity the numerous authorities in our own language; he has drawn from the French archives some new and important materials; and he has written in a liberal and candid spirit, as well as from an ample acquaintance with the original sources of information. His Appendix, which covers about a hundred and fifty pages, is a perfect treasury of new and interesting matter. It comprises numerous despatches from the Duc de Choiseul and the Comte de Vergennes, very clearly exhibiting the views of the French court during the struggle between the English colonies and the mother country, beside a curious memoir on American affairs drawn up by order of the French government before the actual commencement of hostilities. Many valuable extracts from the unpublished correspondence of the Duc de Choiseul, and other illustrative documents, are also incorporated with the text. Among the incidental topics on which M. de Witt's labors have thrown the greatest amount of light, is the mission of Citizen Genet to this country. The intrigues of this unscrupulous adventurer are illustrated by more than fifty pages of official letters and documents, never before published, and of great interest; and the whole purpose of his mission, and the various steps taken by him to secure its accomplishment, are now for the first time clearly exhibited.

M. de Witt does not enter at large into the details of Jefferson's life, but he furnishes a very satisfactory sketch of the principal events in it, as well as a very just estimate of his personal character. While he cordially recognizes the worth of Jefferson's public services, he does not fail to condemn the errors of the policy inaugurated by him, and he renders adequate justice to the transcendent genius and pure patriotism of Hamilton. Indeed, his sympathies are much more with the latter than with the former; yet he never allows his judgment to be warped by his feelings, and throughout he writes with impartiality and fairness. His narrative has the best characteristics of the French historians; and, as a philosophical dissertation on the origin of the two great political parties in this country, his volume is entitled to high praise.

Nothing better of the kind has been published abroad ; and an American edition of it would be an acceptable contribution to our historical literature.

2. — *An Embassy to the Court of St. James's in 1840.* By F. GUIZOT, Ambassador from his Majesty Louis-Philippe. London : Richard Bentley. 1862. 8vo. pp. 463.

THE English publisher of this volume has given to it the form and title of an independent work, though it is merely a translation of the fifth volume of M. Guizot's *Mémoires de Mon Temps*. This course, however, is not without some justification in the fact that the volume has a real unity of its own, and may without violence be separated from the volumes which have preceded, and from those which may follow it. The book covers a comparatively brief period, and relates to a single episode in its author's life ; but it may be read with pleasure by persons who know and care little or nothing about the Eastern Question, in the discussion of which M. Guizot took so important a share as minister to England. The fourth chapter, for instance, which is entitled "English Society in 1840," and covers about fifty pages, presents a very admirable summary of the impressions produced on the writer by his residence in London, with personal sketches of some of the most conspicuous statesmen and men of letters with whom he was brought into contact in the freedom of private intercourse. Among the most interesting of these sketches are the notices of Lord Holland and Earl Grey, and of Mr. Hallam and Lord Macaulay. To Mr. Hallam, M. Guizot renders the homage of a sincere and cordial admiration. "I never knew a man," he writes, "more sincerely and thoroughly liberal, and at the same time more divested of national prejudice and party spirit ; no one more exclusively anxious to discover truth and to render justice to all, without any thought of pleasing or displeasing adversaries or friends. The natural rectitude of his judgment, his vast and accurate knowledge, the generous devotion of his soul, and his perfect disinterestedness, made him inflexibly just, and a stranger, even in the cause he held most at heart, — that of religious and political liberty, — to every kind of idle speculation or fanaticism." With Lord Macaulay he appears to have been less intimately acquainted, and he scarcely does justice to that great man, though he speaks of him with the respect which his splendid achievements as an essayist and an historian must always command, and gives an interesting account of a visit to Westminster Abbey under his guidance. But it was natural that any one of a nature so cold and